

**State Tribal Economic Development Commission**  
**MEETING MINUTES \*FINAL\***  
**July 25, 2013**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Shawn Real Bird- Chairman (Crow Tribe), Richard Sangrey-Vice Chairman (Chippewa Cree Tribe), Jason Smith (Director of Indian Affairs), Andy Poole (Montana Department of Commerce), Gerald Gray (Little Shell), Mike Fox (Fort Belknap), Terry Pitts (Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes)

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** Representative Lea Whitford (HD16 & Blackfeet Planning), Jodi Running Fisher (Blackfeet Planning), Blaine County Commissioner Delores Plumage, Rubin Horseman (Fort Belknap), Judy Gray (Fort Belknap), Douglas Stuart (Fort Belknap/Harlem- Rose Community Development Corporation), Delina Cuts The Rope (Fort Belknap alternate), Channis Whiteman (Crow nominee for Commission), Rhonda Fenner (Governor's Office of Indian Affairs), Terry Brockie (Blaine County School Superintendent)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Heather Sobrepena-George

**WELCOME/PURPOSE OF GATHERING:** Commence at 9:25am. Chairman Shawn Real Bird; Prayer Richard Sangrey.

Quorum established: 7 voting members present.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Rubin Horseman expressed concern over the state-tribal road agreement between the Fort Belknap Indian Community and the State of Montana. Chairman Real Bird noted that the commission is not a regulatory agency. Director Smith said he noted Mr. Horsemen's concerns and would deliver them to the Montana Department of Transportation.

Commissioner Plumage expressed interest in how sequestration will affect tribes and what impact that will have on local, county and state governments in Montana. Plumage expressed thanks for commissioners meeting in this area.

Douglas Stuart thanked and encouraged the commission to look at international models of economic development and public/private partnerships (i.e. Japan) and to continue attempts to reduce poverty, compliment tribal government efforts and support good tribal regulatory environments.

Judy Gray thanked the commission for making the trip, expressed interest about economic development activities what at the state and tribal level regarding economic development.

Terry Pitts expressed appreciation for comments about sequestration, emphasizing that it is and individual issue for each tribe. Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes has held multiple meetings with each department to prioritize services and activities within programs and come up with a primary funding strategy. Cuts will impact services and employment, but this is an example of why tribal governments need to pursue self-sufficiency. Current council members are facing a backlash from some sectors of the membership over the saving rather than distributing a portion of the Salazar settlement money, but council is trying to anticipate changes and implement strategies to bring sustainable prosperity to the membership. Currently Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes is working on an initiative to integrate technology, training, and entrepreneurship opportunities for the tribal workforce that match available jobs and market trends (i.e. Kerr Dam).

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Richard Sangrey relayed that the Chippewa Cree Tribe is prepared for sequestration and held back 8% in the current fiscal year in anticipation of the cuts. Some departments that didn't will have to work 32 hour weeks to offset the cuts. Retirements and cut backs are occurring at the tribal college. The border towns to the reservation communities have not yet realized the financial impact, but they will realize it next year as their revenue is derived in part from tribal money flowing into their local economies. The impact to the economic hubs of Billings, Havre, and Great Falls will be significant. The Chippewa Cree Tribe has developed a packet that shows the impact of their spending in places such as Hill County. Richard also mentioned the recent news of Blackstone Launchpad Entrepreneurship 3 year- \$2 million Initiative in partnership with Montana University System to introduce entrepreneurship as a viable career option to students. Richard would like to see that initiative extend to the tribal colleges.

Representative Whitford noted that the 63<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Session was her first session and sat on the House Appropriations Committee that oversees the entire state budget. The subcommittee for each agency scrutinizes everything and it is critically important the public participate in the hearings. The Montana Indian Language Preservation Pilot Program is actually a concept that has been on the table a long time and this session was an excellent opportunity to get this legislation passed. Be assured that the tangible materials delivered to the Montana Historical Society for archiving should be accessible and available to everyone.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND ACTIONS THEREON:**

- 1) May 17, 2013 minutes
- 2) June 5, 2013 minutes
- 3) June 19, 2013 minutes

*Motion made to adopt the meeting minutes as a whole with the change of Lea Whitford House District "16" to the June 19, 2013 minutes. Seconded by Richard Sangrey. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.*

**REPORTS:**

- 1) **STEDC Budget-** Heather presented the fiscal year end budget and noted that the approximately \$36,000 in personal services vacancy savings was deposited into the commission's special revenue account as an equal contribution to the 2017 STEDC Indian Equity Fund in the amount of \$4,500 per tribal government.
- 2) **STEDC 2017 Indian Equity Fund account balance-** Heather presented the account balance that shows the contribution of each tribal government. A total of \$57,700 has been contributed with a goal of \$252,000, leaving \$194,000 for the tribal governments to contribute. Andy Poole reminded the group that the Indian Country Economic Development Program application period is opening up and tribal governments can use a portion of their ICED funds to contribute. Setting aside a little funding every year will be much easier than contributing the total amount all at once.

**ONGOING BUSINESS:**

Richard Sangrey mentioned that the Strategic Planning Session activities have been pushed off for more than a year. It is time to resume a strategic planning session so that the commission can determine its direction and priorities. Richard proposed that the commission have a strategic planning session

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meeting on August 6<sup>th</sup> to coincide with the upcoming Native American Development Corporation conference (August 7-8).

Other comments:

Shawn Real Bird: Horse races are running in Great Falls. The Montana Board of Horse Racing has been moved to the Montana Department of Commerce. All racing dates are hopefully open next year. These events are primarily Native American horses and racers.

Lea Whitford: Extending an invitation to the Holiday Inn Express and Suites grand opening on August 7<sup>th</sup>. Cheryl Reevis will come to Billings after the grand opening.

Mike Fox: After the Montana Project Roundtable discussion, individuals are invited to tour the renovation of the Smokehouse Grill Restaurant and Trading Post. Triangle telephone is also hosting a grand opening of an office adjacent to the restaurant.

**1) Montana Indian Language Preservation Pilot Program:**

Delores Plumage introduced Terry Brockie, Superintendent of Blaine County schools. Superintendent Brockie is thankful for the Montana Indian Language Preservation Pilot Program. He is a certified Class 7 Indian Language Specialist.

Heather updated the group that the guidelines have all been adopted by the commission. Guidelines packets were distributed to members and guests. A public hearing on the proposed administrative rules was held on June 26<sup>th</sup>. Public comments were received and provided a response by Heather. A notice of adoption should be published in the Montana Administrative Rules (MAR) publication as of today (July 25<sup>th</sup>). The program has met its deadline of having rules in place by July 31<sup>st</sup>. Once tribal governments get their local program advisory boards established and applications received/approved, the department can enter into contract with the tribal governments for the \$250,000 in funds. Contracts must be entered into on or before September 30, 2013. Funds not contracted by October 31, 2013 can be reallocated to current contracts with an additional scope of work. Tangible goods are due September 15, 2014. Reporting to the State Tribal Relations Committee (STRC) will occur at each meeting of the interim committee. Proposed STRC dates for the next year are:

Oct 3-4	Ft. Belknap
Jan 13-14	Crow & Billings prison
Apr 28-29	CSKT
Jul 24-25	Little Shell & Shelby prison & Helena

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**TERO Roundtable at NADC Conference**

Jason Smith had to leave the meeting early and distributed a letter inviting the commissioners to a Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance/Office roundtable discussion at the upcoming Native American Development Corporation conference on August 7 in the Babcock East Conference Room at 2pm.

**1) Indian Country Economic Development Program:**

Heather distributed state fiscal year 2014 Indian Country Economic Development (ICED) program guidelines and forms. The guidelines are similar to previous years with the exception that the Application (Appendix A) has an expanded budget section that provides room for expense assumptions for costs charged to the grant.

**2) Fort Belknap Reservation Economic Demographic Flyer:**

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Heather presented the draft of Fort Belknap's updates to their economic demographic flyer. The narrative was developed in collaboration with Delina Cuts The Rope. Graphs and charts were rearranged to present the most pertinent information first. QR codes were added to the back page so that individuals with smart phones can scan the code and go directly to the most up-to-date economic demographic data for each specified reservation. The Research and Analysis Bureau is putting together final drafts of flyers for each tribal government. They will be presented to each tribal government one last time before publication. One thing to note is that the Census of Agriculture Statistics will no longer be gathered or published as a result of sequestration. Richard mentioned that the Bureau of Indian Affairs Labor Force Report has not been updated since 2005. A 2009 edition was released and then immediately recalled.

Members and guests concurred that economic and demographic data is important and will become less readily available from traditional sources (Census and BIA) and will need to be enumerated at a local level, possibly by the tribal governments themselves, at tribal colleges or at a collaborative level between the states and tribes. Tribal governments use them to distribute to students researching their reservation, the Montana Association of Counties uses them, and elected officials in the Legislature would benefit from having them.

*Motion made by Gerald Gray to approve the printing of 2,000 flyers per tribal government at an estimated cost of \$4,195 from the commission budget. Seconded by Mike Fox. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.*

**LUNCH:** Over lunch, the group discussed the upcoming strategic planning session. Potential topics of discussion or areas of interest of economic development are:

- **Revenue drivers:** sanctioned horse racing, tribal enterprises (such as C stores), tourism development (amenities and activities),
- **Tribal government business infrastructure and regulatory support:** including native CDFI development & support, wealth creation (home ownership, financial literacy, credit builder programs), legal infrastructure, financial regulatory infrastructure, better/accountable school systems
- **Entrepreneurship & small business support:** technical assistance, access to capital, equity grant support
- **Trainings for the STED Commission:** tax credit training
- **STED Commission /State Tribal Programs Sustainability:** preparing for upcoming legislative session
- **Language preservation support**
- **Sequestration effects**
- **Tribal data**

**CLOSE/ADJOURN:** *Motion made by Richard Sangrey to adjourn the meeting at 12:56. Seconded by Mike Fox. All in favor. Unanimous approval.*